History

OF OUR

Baptist Missions

Among the Karens.

BY

Mrs. S. B. TITTERINGTON.

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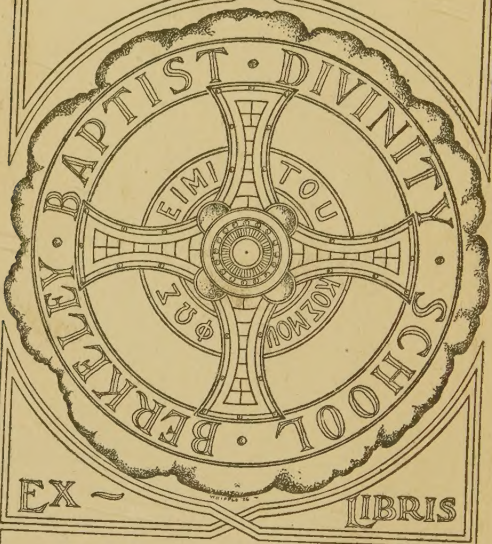

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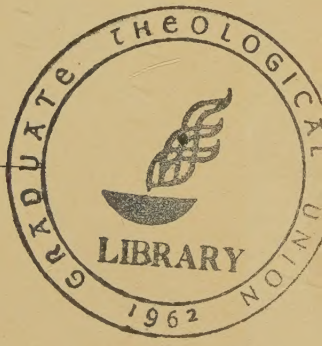

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INTRODUCTION.

THIS little book is, of necessity, only an outline of the work in the Mission of which it tells the story. To those using it as a text book, a few suggestions may be helpful.

An attempt has been made to supply in some degree, by the Questions and Supplemental Readings, the unavoidable omissions in the text. Many of the questions call for outside study, and the needed information may be found, in most cases, in the Supplementary Readings. The latter are given in variety, as some may be available when others are not. The more thoroughly the course of study indicated is followed, the greater will be the interest, and the more satisfactory the results.

The matter of the book forms a series of chapters in the larger work by the same author, "A Century of Baptist Foreign Missions," which is still published by the Society. It is put in this form that it may reach some perhaps who cannot afford the expense of the larger book.

4975

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

A Fire Kindled, ... 5

CHAPTER II.

Jungle Victories, ... 12

CHAPTER III.

Success in Adversity, ... 20

CHAPTER IV.

Sunshine and Shadow, ... 27

CHAPTER V.

Looking Beyond, ... 33

CHAPTER VI.

Trial and Victory, ... 41

BAPTIST MISSIONS AMONG THE KARENS.

CHAPTER I.

A FIRE KINDLED.

FIFTEEN years after Adoniram Judson landed in Burma, the Karens came under the observation of the missionaries. George Dana Boardman established the Tavoy mission in 1828. A servant in his family was converted. An almost ungovernable temper delayed his baptism for a year, but giving ample proof of genuine conversion, Ko-thah-byu was baptized. Afterward, by remarkable missionary labors, he won the title of "Apostle to the Karens." This race to which he belonged was quite distinct from the Burmans. A despised mountain people, they were small in stature, more peaceable in disposition. Only Christianity can make the haughty Burman and simple Karen brothers.

Ko-thah-byu went everywhere, proclaiming Christ's salvation to his people. They received the gospel with such gladness that Mr. Boardman made them the objects of his labor. Without religion, save demon worship, they were more easily reached than Buddha's followers. An ancient tradition taught that their sacred books, long lost, would be brought from the west by white men. In the coming of the missionary, they read the fulfillment.

Two years was Mr. Boardman permitted to labor among the Karens, then the Master called him home. Rev. Francis Mason came in 1831, and the last effort of Mr. Boardman's life was to be carried two days journey to witness the baptism of thirty-four Karens, February 9, 1831, by Mr. Mason. He died on the return to Tavoy. Mrs. Boardman remained three years to carry on his work, taking charge while the Masons learned the language.

The Karens are subdivided into the Sgau, Pwo, Paku, Bghais, Red Karens, and other tribes, with different dialects and varying customs. The work began among the Sgaus.

When Mr. Boardman died, seventy Karens had received baptism. The gospel quickly spread through the Tenasserim provinces, through the efforts of Ko-thah-byu and the missionaries. But heathen associations hindered the converts. Naturally a wandering race, advantage was taken of this to group them in Christian villages, which idea has since prevailed. In 1832, Rev. Jonathan Wade reduced the Sgau Karen language to written form, and books were prepared.

Converts multiplied rapidly. From the first, they gave evidence of a missionary spirit, each one striving to spread the glad news among his countrymen.

Ko-thah-byu was a born missionary. He pushed out over the mountains, and through the jungles, even into

distant provinces. The Lord was with him, and converts came in almost daily, requesting baptism from far-off villages, the fruit of his labors. He was not remarkable for intellectual endowment, but was instrumental in bringing thousands to the knowledge of the true God.

In 1834, the Tavoy church formed a missionary society, resolving to support two native preachers, doubling the effort the next year. Mr. Wade and family located in Tavoy in 1835. Mrs. Boardman had gone away as the wife of Dr. Judson. The next year Rev. and Mrs. Vinton came to Rangoon to labor among the Karens in the Pegu district. Ko-thah-byu had preceded them, and on the first visit of the missionaries, one hundred and seventy were baptized.

A wonderful work followed among the Karens of the Pegu and Rangoon provinces. At first the Vintons traveled together, but the calls from distant villages were so pressing that they separated, and for twenty-four years worked in different directions. Jungle travel was far more arduous and dangerous than now, and Mrs. Vinton had many narrow escapes.

Mr. Vinton was a man of strong faith and remarkable power in prayer. Before going to Burma, his record was notable in revival work. His earnestness and zeal bore fruit among the Karens. Mr. Kincaid, another ardent missionary, was sent to the Burmans, but as

opportunity offered, he preached to the Karens also. Perhaps no man in Burma was more beloved.

A large village of Christian Karens was formed in the Tavoy province. Its site was beautiful, and its name was Matah, or City of Love. It flourished greatly, and with its three hundred Christians, its homes, and its schools, it stood in the jungle as an object lesson of the uplifting power of the gospel.

In 1836, a seminary was established at Tavoy, under charge of Mr. Wade, for training both Karen and Burman preachers. Of the first eighteen pupils, twelve were Karens. For a time the Karen books were all in manuscript, but in 1837 fonts of type were prepared and books printed. Missionary societies were formed at different points, which gathered funds for printing and other evangelical work. The Tavoy Society, in 1839, supported thirteen native preachers and several Karen schools.

The Burmans bitterly persecuted the Christian Karens. In 1835, the hostility took active form in Rangoon. Fines, imprisonment, torture, death itself, were meted out to the helpless flock. The persecution scattered the disciples, and they fled into distant provinces, preaching as they went. The operations of the missionaries at Rangoon were suspended, although they remained at their post. But in the jungles and mountain recesses the gospel was winning its glorious way, and hundreds were turning to the true God.

Civil war added its horrors in 1837, but it could not stop God's work among the Karens. Rev. E. L. Abbott traveled through the districts of Maubee and Pantenau to Bassein. His journey was like a triumphal march. One of the converts was a promising young chief. The political troubles forced the missionaries to leave Burman dominions, and they went to Arakan for the protection of the British flag. News came in 1839 that this man was preaching continually, and that one thousand persons were waiting to be baptized.

The Yoma Mountains separate this province from Burma. Messrs. Kincaid and Abbott sought to keep a watch over their distant flocks from behind the mountains. Mr. Abbott at Sandoway sent word to his Karens that their teacher was in Arakan. The Burmans jealously watched the mountain passes, but despite their vigilance, large companies flocked across the hills for baptism and instruction. So many of the four thousand Karens in Burma fled to Arakan that the Burman governor, fearing their emigration in a body, issued a decree of religious liberty, which, however, was not to be trusted. The exiles in Arakan found freedom to worship God, but the deadly climate decimated their ranks. Cholera raged and claimed many victims. No pen can picture what these persecuted Karens suffered for conscience' sake. Mr. Abbott, alone and unaided, was crushed with the burden of caring for this devoted people from behind

the hills of Arakan. It was a task for ten men. In a single year he buried his wife and two children. The climate was fever breeding, and in 1845 he was obliged to seek rest in America.

The Karen work in Moulmein and Tavoy prospered. In 1840, we find the Vintons at Moulmein. The seven out-stations were entirely Karen. Mergui had become an important station, with six churches. The "Morning Star," a Karen paper, was begun in Tavoy in 1843, and continues until this day. It was afterward removed to Moulmein with the mission press, and has been a means of untold good.

QUESTIONS.

1. When, where, and by whom was the Karen Mission established?
2. Tell the story of Ko-thah-byu.
3. Who took the work from Boardman's dying hands?
4. Describe Boardman's last journey into the wilderness.
5. How many years did Mrs. Boardman remain in Tavoy to carry on his work?
6. Name the Karen subdivisions.
7. Among which tribe did the work begin?
8. Why were the converts grouped in Christian villages?
9. How did the Tavoy church show its missionary spirit?
10. What year did the Vintons begin their wonderful work?
11. How many were baptized on their first tour?
12. Did they journey in company?
13. What is said of Mr. Vinton?
14. What was Mr. Kincaid's relation to the Karens?
15. Give an account of Mata church.
16. What seminary was established in 1836, and who was its founder?
17. When was the earliest printing in Karen?
18. What record of the Tavoy Missionary Society in 1839?
19. Tell the story of persecution.
20. In what year was the civil war?

21. Sketch the tour of Rev. E. L. Abbott. In what district?
22. What is told of a young chief?
23. Where did the political troubles drive the missionaries?
24. What mountains separate Arakan from Burma?
25. Describe the work of Messrs. Kincaid and Abbott.
26. What pestilence raged among the Karen refugees?
27. Give an account of Mr. Abbott's sorrowful experiences.
28. Give events in 1840.
29. Give an account of the Karen religious paper.

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS.

Missionary Sketches. Life of Ko-thah-byu. Missionary Memorials. (Mrs. Sarah B. Judson.) Our Gold Mine, pages 122–132.

LEAFLETS.

Early Mission Work among the Karens. The Karen Mission.

CHAPTER II.

JUNGLE VICTORIES.

THE rapid multiplication of Karen churches, and the consequent need of native assistants, created an imperative call for a trained native ministry. Messrs. Abbott, Vinton, Wade, and Mason had done much in private classes. But it was not possible to do the needed work in this way. Dr. J. G. Binney was designated to establish and direct a Karen Theological Seminary. Mr. Abbott's eloquent appeals in America, and his accounts of the glorious work in Arakan, aided in bringing about this action. In 1846, the Seminary, under Dr. Binney, was opened at Moulmein, and a preparatory school at Tavoy, by Rev. E. B. Cross. At the end of the first year, thirty-six students were enrolled at Moulmein.

Mr. Abbott returned to Burma in 1847. The work had been faithfully prosecuted by the native preachers left in charge. The two ordained ministers had baptized eleven hundred and fifty, while thirty-six native assistants reported twelve hundred awaiting baptism.

In 1848, Messrs. Van Meter, Moore, and Benjamin were designated to the Karens at Moulmein, Sandoway,

and Tavoy. Previously, Mr. and Mrs. Harris had come to Moulmein, Mr. and Mrs. Beecher to Arakan. Mrs. Binney had also established a Karen Normal Girls' School in Moulmein.

As the years passed, the Karen Theological Seminary gave evidence of thorough and valuable work. Theological training classes, preparatory to the higher instruction, were maintained at Tavoy and Sandoway.

The disparity of results among Burmans and Karens was very striking. While much more of labor and money had been expended on Burmans, there were, at the close of 1847, six thousand and ninety-three Karen church members, to two hundred Burmans. Dr. Francis Mason writes: "I presume I have preached the gospel to more Burmans than Karens, and I have baptized about one Burman to fifty Karens. The reason of the great difference is the difference in the preparation of these two nations for the gospel. The Burmans are our Pharisees and Sadducees—the Karens our publicans and sinners."

The "grace of giving" was from the first exemplified among the Karens. It was estimated that the Karen Christians of Tavoy were giving twice as much in proportion to their ability as American Baptists. Not only were chapels built, and native pastors supported, but aggressive foreign mission work carried on. In the Bassein district, since 1848, the Karen pastors have received their entire support from the churches. In 1850, a

Karen Home Mission Society was formed, entirely under Karen direction, and the determination expressed, to send out missionaries, till "every Karen family shall have seen the light of God."

The Sgau Karens had the entire Scriptures in 1853, and the Pwo Karens the New Testament, besides much other literature. Never was the Bible more treasured than by this people.

The second Burman War, in 1852, brought renewed suffering to the Karens. The Burmans suspected them of sympathy with the English, and perpetrated horrible cruelties. The English, after the conquest of Pegu, recognized the valuable aid the Karens had given, and accorded them full protection. The centre of the Karen mission was removed from Sandoway to Bassein, by Messrs. Abbott and Van Meter. Here the Pwo Karens could be reached as well as the Sgaus, and they received the gospel readily.

At the solemn six weeks' deliberation of the missionaries in Burma with the Deputation from America, in 1853, the Karen interests occupied much of the time. Some decisions were made, which time has modified; and a few of the missionaries refused to accept the rulings of the Deputation. This caused much conflict for many years, but time has healed all the differences. It cannot be denied that the general interests of the work were greatly advanced. It was decided that Rangoon, Bas-

sein, Henzada, and Shwegyen were to be permanent Karen stations. Mergui was abandoned, becoming part of the Tavoy field. The Karen press was removed from Tavoy to Moulmein, which was henceforth to be the centre of publication for all Burma. Native agencies were encouraged; normal and primary schools were to be, as far as possible, self-supporting. Boarding schools, and the teaching of English in mission schools, were not approved. The Seminary at Moulmein was to constitute a general Karen Theological School for all Burma.

In consequence of the action of the Deputation, Messrs. Vinton and Harris, Miss Miranda Vinton, and a few others, withdrew from the service of the Missionary Union, although continuing in noble and effective service on the field. In 1854, the Theological Seminary, for a while suspended, was re-opened under charge of Dr. Wade. Kemmendine, a suburb of Rangoon, was made the headquarters of the Rangoon Sgau Karen Mission. The funds raised for the support of the Vintons, at this point and of other seceding missionaries, were transmitted through the Free Mission Society, as were those for Messrs Harris and Beecher, a little later. Mr. Harris, in Shwegyen, was afflicted by the death of his wife. He committed his motherless children to the care of Miss Miranda Vinton, just leaving for America. On her return, she became the wife of Mr. Harris.

Dr. Mason, appointed to Toungoo, was only able to

organize the station when he was compelled to go home, leaving the mission in charge of Sau Quala, an eminent Karen preacher. In two years, more than two thousand had been baptized. At every one of the five stations there was a blessed work.

In the Rangoon district, twenty churches were formed and more than a thousand baptized the first year. Mr. Brayton, designated to the Pwo Karens of this district, settled at Donabew, as a point from which they were easily accessible. Little mission work had been done among this tribe.

At Henzada, Mr. Thomas found willing listeners among a large Karen population, and signs of harvest appeared.

In Moulmein, Dr. Wade continued in charge of the Karen Theological Seminary until the return of Dr. Binney in 1860. This institution had grown in value and importance with the rapid growth of the Karen missions.

At Bassein, six hundred and forty-four baptisms were reported and self-support agreed upon. In their own words: "For preachers, pastors, and ordained ministers, we shall expend no more of the money of our American brethren." This principle of self-help prevailed at Tavoy, Toungoo, Shwegyen, and Henzada. The Moulmein Karens are reaching this point more slowly.

Sau Quala worked with marvelous results in Toungoo

Pressing calls came from every quarter, and he plead with pathetic earnestness for a missionary. Mr. Whitaker went to take general charge of the field, while a graduate of the Theological Seminary was sent to assist Sau Quala. The number baptized under his incessant labors was nearly fifteen hundred.

The Karens in certain provinces were deaf to the gospel. Such a region was that south of Tavoy. Wherever the Karens have received Buddhism, they reject Christianity. This hinders the work among many of the Pwos, and especially among the Burmans.

August 15, 1857, Mr. Whitaker gave up his life for Toungoo. Fever, contracted in mountain tours, brought his useful career to a sudden close.

Mr. Vinton died in 1858. A man of intense earnestness, positive convictions, and fiery zeal, he was wholly consecrated to his work. Idolized by the Karens, his harvest of souls was great.

In 1860, the Theological Seminary was removed to Rangoon, Dr. Binney again at its head. Dr. Wade took up the work of preparing commentaries and other books needed by the theological students. In 1862, the mission press was also removed to Rangoon, the most accessible point in Burma.

In 1860, ten hundred and ninety-six were baptized in the Toungoo district, and the work extended far into the interior. The Red Karens claimed attention. The first

Red Karen tract was printed this year. A view of the Toungoo field revealed fifteen different Karen tribes asking for the gospel. Two hundred and sixty thousand Karens were accessible to the missionary! This year Mr. Cross removed to Toungoo.

In his early missionary life Dr. Wade reduced the Karen language to written forms. In 1860, he prepared a Karen grammar, a great achievement, and invaluable in school work. The Van Meters returned to Bassein, to work specially for the Pwo Karens. The "Morning Star," their own paper, was prized by the people. Dr. Wade was for many years the editor.

QUESTIONS.

1. Why was a trained Karen native ministry greatly needed?
2. What missionary had given training in private classes?
3. By whom, when, and where was the Karen Theological Seminary opened?
4. Give account of the preparatory school.
5. What results did Mr. Abbott find on his return from America?
6. Give the roll of new missionaries.
7. What was the character of work in the Theological Seminary?
8. What caused the disparity of results among the Burmans and Karens? Give Dr. Mason's opinion.
9. Note some of the beginnings of self-support among the Karens.
10. Relate the beginnings of foreign mission work.
11. What year was the entire Bible given to the Sgau Karens?
12. What portion was about the same time given the Pwos?
13. What renewed sufferings did the war in 1852 bring the Karens, and what recognition by Government?
14. When and by whom was the removal of the Karen mission from Sandoway to Bassein?
15. Give results of the visit of the Deputation.

16. What Society transmitted funds for the support of the seceding missionaries?
17. What eminent Karen preacher labored in Toungoo? What were the results?
18. What record the first year of the re-opening of the Rangoon district?
19. What was the location of the Rangoon Pwo Karen work? Who were in charge?
20. Who was the Henzada Karen missionary?
21. What is said of the Karen Theological Seminary?
22. Give the decision of the Bassein Karens regarding self-support.
23. In what other place did this principle prevail?
24. Give account of Sau Quala and the Toungoo field.
25. Tell the story of Mr. Vinton's life and death.
26. In what year was the Theological Seminary removed? where, and under whose charge?
27. What work did Dr. Wade assume?
28. What was the record of 1860 in the Toungoo district?
29. What later work did Dr. Wade accomplish?

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS.

Missionary Sketches. The Vintons and the Karens. The Story of the Karen Mission in Bassein.

CHAPTER III.

SUCCESS IN ADVERSITY.

DURING the years of the civil war in America, the straitened treasury of the Missionary Union greatly hampered mission operations. Retrenchment was imperative to a degree that was nearly fatal to certain departments. Many schools were closed, less printing done, fewer native agencies employed. Much sickness left the stations of Tavoy and Shwegyen for several years without a resident missionary. This state of affairs rendered imperative the better support of the Karen Theological Seminary, since the Karen tribes, if evangelized at all, must be reached by their own countrymen. Yet the financial stringency compelled almost fatal retrenchment, even here. In fact, during these years of bloodshed and civil strife at home, the missionary field presented a panorama of languishing interests, and almost fatal impoverishment.

In 1861, Rev. J. B. Vinton came to Rangoon to carry on the work of his lamented father, associated with his mother, and Mr. and Mrs. Luther. This was a mission, as we have seen, supported by independent funds, and was remarkably successful. A normal school for Karen

lads was established at Moulmein. The churches supported a Young Men's Normal School at Toungoo.

One month after Mr. Carpenter reached Rangoon, he gives this pen-picture:

"I wish you could see Dr. Binney's sixty-two barefooted, bare-legged students of theology. They are all crowded into a one-story building. They probably do not taste of meat once a week. Their food consists mainly of paddy (unhulled rice), which they pound out for themselves. They submit to all this cheerfully, and dig like good fellows for the sake of knowledge, and the ability to read understandingly, and expound to their countrymen the Karen Bible."

Meanwhile, the work was making progress among the Pwos. In 1863, the Pwo churches in the Bassein district formed a separate Association.

Trouble was at hand in Toungoo. Mrs. Mason, so long a faithful and earnest Christian teacher, laboring under mental derangement, taught strange and fatal delusions to her trusting Karens. This resulted in an almost general defection of the churches under the care of the Masons. Dr. Mason did not seem to realize the danger of her course, and it became a painful necessity to withdraw the patronage of the Union. In later years he saw his error, and sought to undo it as far as possible. He died in the service of the Missionary Union.

In 1866, Mr. Harris was re-appointed a missionary of

the Union, and returned to Shwegyen. The devoted Karens remembered his former faithful labor among them, and, in 1865, entreated his return, contributing one hundred dollars toward his passage. Their letter touchingly closes thus: "Dear brethren and sisters, in every place, great and small, male and female, have pity upon us, pray for us, and assist us in getting back our teachers."

In 1865, Mr. Bunker was sent to the Red Karens, with headquarters at Toungoo. His musical training, teaching them to sing part-music, was most attractive to the music-loving Karens.

Dr. Binney retired from the theological seminary this same year, on account of Mrs. Binney's health. Rev. C. H. Carpenter and Rev. D. A. W. Smith, who had been associated with him for three years, assumed the charge. A few months later Dr. Binney returned to Burma, and Mr. Smith removed to Henzada to take the work of Mr. Thomas, who had been transferred to Bassein.

For thirteen years the Bassein Sgau Karen Mission had been separated from the Missionary Union. It will be remembered that Rev. Elisha L. Abbott was the founder of the mission, a true spiritual father. He spared not himself, but labored on until body and spirit alike failed. Listen to his parting words to his beloved Karens:

"The kingdom of Christ is here in Bassein. You

must care for it, and labor for it faithfully. If his kingdom prospers, it will prosper through your efforts. If it is destroyed, it will be at your hands." Mr. Abbott died in America in 1854.

Rev. J. S. Beecher, associated with Mr. Abbott in the hearts of the Karens, hastened at their call. But events caused him to enter the service of the American Baptist Free Mission Society. This change of relation, so fraught with pain at the time, was the Providence that threw the Karen churches upon themselves, and developed their splendid system of self-support. Mr. Beecher continued the work along Mr. Abbott's successful line. He established the Sgau Karen Normal and Industrial Institute, so flourishing in these later days. The Karens paid for the school buildings. In recognition of Karen loyalty and service during the war, Government granted them a beautiful site of ten acres, free from taxes as long as used for missionary purposes.

Mr. Beecher's health failed in 1866, and he left Burma, never to return. Two marble tablets, side by side, on the west wall of the fine memorial hall in Bassein, commemorate in loving words these two heroes who gave their lives to the Bassein Karens.

Lapse of time had softened differences, and there is reason to believe, if Mr. Beecher had lived, he would have returned under the Missionary Union. The Bassein churches wrote an appeal to the executive committee,

asking that Mr. Thomas, of Henzada, be sent them. It was the Lord reinstating the Missionary Union in its old field. When the appeal came, Mr. Thomas, with broken health, was about leaving for America. It seemed like the voice of Providence, and hoping that strength would come from change of location, he removed, as has been seen, to Bassein. But the delay cost his life the next year.

Who should succeed him? This was the subject of anxious debate at the meeting of the Burman Baptist Convention, held at Bassein, November, 1868. Then it was that the ocean cable did its first missionary work. The executive committee in Boston gave answer to the problem in the dispatch, "Carpenter transferred to Bassein, Smith to Rangoon." The Bassein Karens were joyful, the Henzada Karens cast down at losing the teacher they had learned to love. They wished to raise immediately the money to cable back a protest, but wiser counsel prevailed, and they communicated by letter.

In 1869, Mr. Norris removed from Moulmein to take charge of the work in Tavoy. Rev. S. B. Rand was this year established at Moulmein. In 1870, the sad Henzada Karens were rejoiced by Mr. Smith's return, another cablegram saying, "Go." As a new departure, they were made the almoners of their own contributions. The result was most gratifying, as a step toward independent action.

Self-support in the Bassein Mission continued its wonderful development. In 1868, the Missionary Union purchased the property held by the Free Mission Society, and assumed full control. The independence of the churches in providing largely for their own religious needs is remarkable in a poor people, as heavily taxed as any people in the world. Their chapels, long built by themselves, are better than their own dwellings. They are more anxious for education than in any other province. Schools they will have, with the best teachers to be secured.

When Mr. Carpenter reached Bassein, in 1868, he found the school buildings nearly in ruins. He proposed a plan whereby in ten years commodious buildings could be secured without expending a dollar of American money. At first they were appalled by the magnitude of the undertaking, but the result was so overwhelming, that they willingly assumed the endowment of the school. Not only did they contribute to these home interests, but they also sent missionaries into the regions beyond.

Shwegyen was not far behind. Pastors and churches, out of deep poverty, raised about three thousand rupees, and appointed a committe from among themselves to distribute this fund, relieving the Missionary Union of any appropriation, either for schools or native preachers.

QUESTIONS.

1. What was the effect of the straitened missionary treasury?
2. What special events in 1861?
3. Give Mr. Carpenter's pen-picture of Karen theological students.
4. What progress among the Pwos?
5. Describe the defection in Toungoo.
6. State facts regarding Mr. Harris' return.
7. What is said of the Toungoo Red Karens and their missionary?
8. What changes in the Karen Theological Seminary?
9. Tell the story of the Bassein Sgau Karen Mission, and the grand results accomplished.
10. What was the first missionary message of the ocean cable?
11. What changes at Moulmein and Tavoy?
12. What is said of the Henzada Karens?
13. What further facts regarding self-support in the Bassein Sgau Karen Mission?
14. Give outline of Mr. Carpenter's plans, and their results.
15. What is said of Shwegyen?

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS.

Missionary Sketches. Self-support in Bassein. The Vintons and the Karens. The Story of the Karen Mission in Bassein.

CHAPTER IV.

SUNSHINE AND SHADOW.

IN 1870, a memorial was addressed to the Missionary Union, by the missionaries, regarding the imperative need of higher education among the Karens. The Roman Catholics offered this advantage, and in self-defense the Baptists must give their converts equal opportunities. As a result, the Rangoon Baptist College was formally opened May 28, 1872, under charge of Dr. Binney and Rev. John Packer.

The year 1871 was a notable year in Karen annals. The Rangoon Sgau Karen work was re-united with the Missionary Union, after a separation of seventeen years, and Mr. Vinton appointed its missionary. The churches in Toungoo, led away by Mrs. Mason, nearly all came back to their old faith, and Dr. Mason was re-appointed. It was also the year of the organization of the Women's Societies, whose work has been most extended among the Karens. Mr. Cross revised the New Testament, making a reference edition.

Mrs. Van Meter, laboring alone for the Bassein Pwo Karens, while her husband sought health in America, received the crushing news of his death. Instead of

going home, she begged for an associate for the field she loved better than life. In a little over a year, she followed her husband, the last survivor of the three missionary couples associated in Sandoway in early days.

Mr. Norris left Tavoy with broken health in 1871. The Carpenters went home on furlough the next year. Mr. Hopkinson arrived in Bassein just after their departure. Miss A. L. Stevens was the first gift of the Woman's Board to the Bassein Karens.

Dr. Wade died in 1872, having been a missionary for over fifty years. The Karens have reason to bless his memory as the man who reduced both the Sgau and Pwo Karen dialects to written form, and prepared a Karen grammar. The Karen Thesaurus, a work in five volumes, is of incalculable value. His labors, both literary and evangelical, are beyond enumeration.

A bird's-eye view in 1873 shows interesting advance. The lady teachers at nearly every station are representatives of the Women's Boards. At Moulmein, we find the Sgau Karen department in charge of Rev. S. B. Rand and his sister, Miss C. H. Rand. We see Tavoy sitting in loneliness. The eyes of the Karens are turned longingly toward America for a teacher. Its twenty-three churches need more shepherding than the twenty-one native preachers can give.

The Bassein Sgau Karen work we find in charge of Mr. Hopkinson, and the Pwo Karen under care of Rev.

Sabin T. Goodell. The wise plans of Mr. Carpenter are being carried on successfully. Rev. D. A. W. Smith, still at Henzada, is aided in school work by Miss De Wolfe. The work is also steadily advancing at Shwegyen. Mr. Harris, the veteran, labors on, laying broad and deep foundations for the future independence of the churches. Rev. B. P. Cross is designated to Shwegyen.

We close this view of the work in 1873 with a glance at Toungoo. It has had a checkered history since its founding in 1853. We find Dr. Cross in charge of the Sgaus, aided by Miss Shaw. Dr. Mason, in declining health, is preparing a Karen concordance. Those drawn away in the great apostasy led by Mrs. Mason are fast returning. Rev. Alonzo Bunker, aided by Misses Eastman and Butler, is in charge of the Red Karen work.

For years a great desire had been felt to reach the Karens in Siam. When the Carpenters left Burma in 1872, they went by way of this country, that they might visit the Karens beyond the border. Their trip from Moulmein to Bangkok covered six hundred and twenty miles. On their way they scattered precious seed, trusting God for the harvest. Two months were thus spent for the Siamese Karens.

This same year, the plan of weekly "pice" offerings (a pice is a fraction of a cent) was tested in Henzada. This was given in addition to the regular tithe offerings. In one year, this fund amounted to the sum of five hun-

dred rupees. It was applied toward the erection of school buildings.

Miss Stevens, a worker of rare ability, was compelled to leave Bassein, utterly prostrated. Denied the privilege of working abroad, she is doing good service in the home department.

Mr. and Mrs. Carpenter returned to Burma in 1874, accompanied by Miss Helen Watson, for Henzada. Mr. Carpenter was president of Rangoon Baptist College until 1875. The question of removing the college to Bassein having been decided adversely, he resigned and returned to Bassein.

In 1874, Dr. Mason died at Rangoon. When he first reached Burma, in 1830, he took the Karen work from the dying hand of Mr. Boardman. He planted the Toungoo mission in 1853. His last work was to remove to Upper Burma, in the hope of planting a station among the wild Ka Khyens. Before he could accomplish this, however, the Master called him home.

A severe famine in the Toungoo district brought distress and danger. Great fatality among the Christian Karens was only averted by the concerted action of all the Baptist churches in Burma in sending relief.

In 1875, the gifts of the Bassein Karens averaged four rupees per member, given out of deep poverty.

Dr. Binney returned to America in 1874, and Mr. Smith was called from Henzada to become president of

the theological seminary. Dr. Binney had been for thirty years connected with this special work, of such vital importance to the evangelizing of the Karens.

Mr. Rand, of Moulmein, after an unavailing struggle with disease, was driven home in 1876, leaving Mr. Colburn and Miss Rand in charge of the work. Mrs. Cross having been removed by death, Mr. and Mrs. B. P. Cross were transferred from Shwegyen to Toungoo, to be associated with Dr. Cross in his loneliness. Relieved of touring work, the father devoted himself to Scripture revision.

Mrs. Thomas, returning in 1874, had charge of the Henzada Karen Mission. She inaugurated a plan to have the native pastors give a part of each year to evangelizing labors, accompanied by one or more helpers. More than four thousand rupees were brought in 1876 for religious purposes.

At the Bassein Association, in 1875, the Sgau Karens resolved to raise a special building fund of twenty thousand rupees in three years, for the Bassein Normal and Industrial School. About twelve thousand rupees had previously been raised for permanent school buildings, making a total of about thirty-two thousand rupees for education. The Bassein Pwo Karens were endeavoring to raise seven thousand rupees within three years. A grand offering is thus shown from the Lord's poor.

This same year, Mrs. Thomas made an interesting tour among the mountain Karens in her district. Here the

nation was found in its ancient condition, untouched by the uplifting power of the gospel. A religion of superstition kept them in bondage to fear. Such a trip would have been a serious undertaking for a strong man.

After many years of desolation, Tavoy rejoiced in 1876 over Mr. and Mrs. Morrow. It was no slight task to gather up the dropped threads; but it was evident that the Lord had his own, even in Tavoy. Early in 1877, the Crumbs joined the Red Karen Mission in Toungoo.

QUESTIONS.

1. What led to the founding of Rangoon Baptist College?
2. Where was its formal opening? Who were in charge?
3. Why was 1871 a notable year?
4. What is said of Mrs. Van Meter?
5. What changes in Bassein?
6. Give sketch of Dr. Wade's life, and date of death.
7. What of Moulmein in 1873?
8. What of Bassein, Henzada, and Shwegyen?
9. What of Toungoo?
10. Describe the Carpenters' tour in Siam.
11. What new plan of finance in Henzada, and what results?
12. What is said of Miss Stevens?
13. What was Mr. Carpenter's temporary work, and why did he resign it?
14. Give sketch of Dr. Francis Mason's life and death.
15. How did brotherly love save life in Toungoo?
16. What were the average gifts of Bassein Sgau Karens in 1875?
17. What is said of Dr. Binney?
18. Who became President of Karen Theological Seminary?
19. What changes at Moulmein and Toungoo?
20. What is said of Mrs. Thomas and the Henzada mission?
21. What new undertaking of Bassein Karens in 1875?
22. Describe Mrs. Thomas' remarkable tour.
23. What is said of Tavoy and Toungoo?

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS.

Missionary Sketches. Self-support in Bassein. Life of a Working man, by Dr. Francis Mason.

CHAPTER V.

LOOKING BEYOND.

THE opening of the Ka Khyen field seemed to the Karens the call to mission work. They assumed it with great enthusiasm, although bearing weighty financial burdens of their own. Men volunteered to go among this stranger people, and the churches promised to sustain them. Speh was the first Karen missionary to go into the hills. The Ka Khyens received him cordially, and promised to feed him.

Dr. Binney, aged and feeble, sailed again for Burma, in 1877, hoping for a lease of life to finish certain Karen text books. But it was not to be. He died on shipboard, eight days before the steamer reached Rangoon. His work in training Karen preachers has left its lasting impress upon Burma. Mrs. Binney remained to finish, as far as possible, his work.

November 16, Mr. Goodell died at Rangoon, whither he had gone for medical aid. The Bassein Pwo Karens were in mourning for their beloved teacher, whose five years service had ended with his life.

Mr. Bunker was obliged to leave Toungoo, in 1858. He writes: "It is many times harder to leave my work

here to go home, than it was to leave home in the beginning. I would not do it if I was not compelled."

In January, 1878, three Karen men were needed immediately for Upper Burma. To this simple, home-loving people, the going into the Ka Khyen hills meant exile quite as truly as the outgoing of an American missionary to Burma. After much prayer and solemn appeal, two young men from the seminary were sent. Others held themselves in readiness to go when needed.

The year 1878 was the jubilee of the Karen mission. Fifty years before, May 16, 1828, Ko-thah-byu, the first convert, was baptized by Mr. Boardman, and afterward, by his zeal and missionary spirit, won the name of the "Karen Apostle." This jubilee year found the number of Karen Christians to be over twenty thousand. The fine commodious building erected by the Karens for the Bassein Normal and Industrial Institute was dedicated on this anniversary day, free of debt, and called the Ko-thah-byu Memorial Hall. It will accommodate three hundred boarding pupils. During this jubilee year, the Bassein Karens contributed fifty thousand rupees for religious and educational purposes. Later, came the E. L. Abbott Endowment Fund, which in 1884 amounted to thirteen thousand six hundred and ninety-nine dollars and fifty cents. The Toungoo Karens also sent two of their number into Karenee as missionaries. Others made preaching tours among the villages.

Another native preacher labored among the Padoungs. A month of field work by Mr. Smith, and the two upper classes from the seminary in a needy part of the Henzada field, resulted in much good.

Mr. Freiday writes in 1878: "Thank God, Brother Carpenter's Bassein Karens have adopted the Ka Khyens as their mission field, for this secures the Ka Khyen mission prayers, men, and money in an unusual degree; as the Bassein Christians are not accustomed to look back when once they put their hand to the plow."

Another signal event in 1878 was the completion of the Bible in Pwo Karen by Mr. Brayton. The undertaking had covered thirty years of assiduous work, carried on in connection with the varied duties of a general missionary. In 1879, Rangoon Baptist College possessed a new and commodious building.

A mysterious disease called beri-beri caused great mortality and suffering among the students of the theological seminary. For years, varying plans were tried for its removal, but in vain, and the final result was the purchase, in 1890, of a new location at Insein, nine miles from Rangoon, on the Prome Railroad, and the gradual removal of the school from the infected buildings.

In 1879, Rev. J. T. Elwell and wife took Mr. Goodell's Pwo Karen work in Bassein. A new station, Maubin, was opened among this tribe, by Rev. W. Bushnell and wife.

At Toungoo, the Red Karen work was successfully carried on by Misses Eastman and Ambrose. Mr. Bunker returned in 1880.

In April, 1880, the Carpenters made a long desired trip into the Ka Khyen country, to look after the Karen foreign mission work in the hills. Most gratifying success was apparent. A little later, broken health drove them to America. Rev. W. I. Price, of the Telugu mission, was transferred to Shwegyen.

Dr. Vinton was most indefatigible in jungle work. Malarious regions did not turn him back; the sure prospect of jungle fever did not keep him from those he sought. He writes in 1881: "If you do not hear from me, take it for granted that Vinton is in the jungle, with headquarters on his elephant's head, and you will not be far wrong."

Rev. W. F. Thomas and wife came to Henzada in 1880, to the great joy of his mother, heroically working alone. Immediately they set out for the jungle in company.

One marked feature of the Karen churches was the careful examination of candidates for baptism. This resulted in a strong and spiritual membership, with little need for discipline.

In 1881, at the request of the Burma Baptist Convention, Messrs. Bushell and Webster made a tour among the Karens of Northern Siam. They found large com-

munities accessible to the gospel. They baptized seventy, and organized three churches. An attempt to prosecute the work by purely native agencies having failed, the Websters removed three years later to Chiengmai.

Dr. Vinton, in 1882, expressed great joy over the baptism of some pupils from the Sgau Karen school in Kemmendine. He says: "I dearly enjoy the privilege of baptizing any true convert; but a new thrill of pleasure comes when I feel that I am putting 'sanctified brains' under the water."

This year Mr. Frank Phinney was appointed to the superintendency of the mission press in Rangoon, rendered vacant by the retirement of Mr. Bennett. The press of the Missionary Union is the only one in the world printing in the Karen and Shan language.

Three of the students in the Theological Seminary this year were Karens from far-distant Siam, sent by their Chiengmai brethren for two years' study. Rev. B. P. Cross and wife were transferred to Rangoon College.

In 1883, there was great advance among the Pwo Karens in Bassein. They organized a missionary society. Circles were formed among the women, and bands among the children. The Pwo Karen Bible, translated and revised by Mr. Brayton, assisted by his daughter, Mrs. Rose, was published.

Mrs. Binney died May 18, 1884, in Rangoon. After the death of her husband she devoted herself to com-

pleting his literary undertakings. Her life was blessed in labors and results, and her memory is precious in Burma.

Mr. Webster gives the story in brief of the mission in Northern Siam:

"An almost wholly native agency, operating at twenty-five days distance from headquarters, three years time; result, one hundred and sixty church members, two churches, two schools, and several men who show exceptional gifts as evangelists. This work is supported by Burman churches, in connection with the Karens."

We have already noted the Bassein Karen foreign mission among the Ka Khyens. A third field was occupied by the Henzada Karens, the work having been originated by Mrs. Thomas, and lies among the Chins in the western valley of the Irrawaddy, extending into Arakan. In 1884, were reported four Chin churches, largely the result of native effort. This interest among the Chins of Arakan led to the re-establishment of the old Sandoway mission, the healthiest spot in the province, which in earlier days proved such a graveyard of missionaries.

Mr. Crumb, missionary to the Red Karens in Toungoo, reported his native preachers doing mission work in Karenee. Seven men were laboring in different directions, and doing much good.

In 1886, Upper Burma was annexed by the English, throwing a vast region open to the gospel.

A movement was made the same year to throw the support of the Theological Seminary upon the Karens. The Bassein Sgaus pledged about one thousand rupees, and the other districts were asked to apportion the amount needed among their membership. The gratifying response showed that systematic and persistent effort on the part of the pastors would bring in funds sufficient to make the seminary a mighty power. Diplomas were given the graduates this year for the first time. The graduating exercises would not have done discredit to an American seminary. Its standing was rising to the level of schools in the home-land.

QUESTIONS.

1. Describe the opening of the Ka Khyen field by the Bassein Sgau Karens.
2. Give the circumstances of Dr. Binney's death.
3. What is said of Mrs. Binney?
4. What bereavement befell the Bassein Pwo Karens in 1877?
5. Give Mr. Bunker's parting words.
6. Tell the story of the consecration of Karen foreign missionaries for work in Upper Burma.
7. Describe the grand results of the jubilee year of Karen foreign mission work.
8. What does Mr. Freiday say in regard to the Karen Ka Khyen Mission?
9. What signal event in 1878?
10. What is said of beri-beri, and what removal did it make necessary?
11. What of Pwo Karen work in 1879?
12. What of Red Karen work in Toungoo?
13. What trip by the Carpenters in 1880?
14. What marked feature among Karen churches?
15. What is said of the work among the Karens of Siam?
16. What joyful experience did Dr. Vinton relate?
17. Give facts regarding change of superintendency of Baptist mission press in Rangoon.

18. What three foreign students in Karen Theological Seminary in 1882? Who sent them?
19. What advance is noted among Bassein Pwo Karens in 1883?
20. When did Mrs. Binney die, and what had she accomplished?
21. Give the story of Northern Siam Mission.
22. Note the new foreign mission fields undertaken by Karens.
23. What important political event in 1886?
24. What is said of the Karen Theological Seminary?

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS.

The Vintons and Karens. Self-support in Bassein. History of Bassein Karens. Twenty-six years in Burma, by Mrs. Binney.

LEAFLETS.

Mrs. J. P. Binney. Christianity and Karen women.

CHAPTER VI.

TRIAL AND VICTORY.

THE annexation of Upper Burma was followed by a period of great excitement and peril. Bands of dacoits wreaked vengeance on the Christian Karens, especially in Shwegyen and Toungoo districts. But the Karens, directed by their missionaries, rose to the occasion, and by brave defense, and equally brave aggression, aided Government in restoring order to the land. A missionary writes:

"It is a fact that the Karens, without exception, muster on the English side, and all through these mountains, have done what the English soldiers have failed to do: they have put down the dacoits. So the Karen hills are becoming, by virtue of the Karen Christians, a vast fortification to the British Government; but which, if held by the Burmans, would become a vast, impenetrable den of thieves.

"More than once, the missionaries were compelled to take up arms, and aid the Karens, in self-defense. From being an oppressed, obscure people, the events of the war have pushed them into noble prominence."

A sad loss was sustained in the death of Dr. Vinton at

Rangoon, in 1887. The dacoit perils taxed the missionaries to the utmost. Dr. Vinton held a position of peculiar responsibility, both to the Karens and to Government. His influence over his people was absolute. He spoke the language like a native, and wrote many beautiful hymns. His large plans for future work were cut short by his sudden death; and all Karen land was in mourning.

The first scholarships in the Karen Theological Seminary were given by two natives; one a Christian deacon, who gave one hundred and fifty dollars, wishing the avails given to some needy student from the Moulmein district. The other was a like amount from a heathen, for the same purpose.

The year 1887 was one of progress. New stations were opened, and the great opportunities were like a bugle call to the Christians of America, summoning them in the name of their God to set up their banners.

After eight years' faithful labor in Moulmein, Dr. Mitchell was compelled to leave her work in Burma for a time. It had long been self-supporting, paying her salary and that of her assistant, Dr. Shaw Loo. She was the second of a line of medical missionaries, sent by the women's societies, and this experiment had proved a triumphant success. More than one thousand patients had been treated at the dispensary in 1887.

Mrs. Vinton, who so nobly carried on her husband's

work after his death, returned to America. From the beginning of the Rangoon Sgau Karen Mission, it had been in charge of but two persons—Justus H. Vinton, and Justus B. Vinton, father and son. Their monument is in the devoted Karens, who, though stricken, rallied to make good their loss by greater effort.

At Christmas, 1887, the Bassein Karens observed their Jubilee. The gospel was first preached within the boundaries of the Bassein district, Christmas Eve, 1837, by Rev. E. L. Abbott. Christmas Eve, 1887, watch meetings were held in many places, attended by thousands. Special thanksgiving services were held on Christmas Day, and the anniversary was both joyful and profitable.

A new station was opened for the Chins, at Thayetmyo, in Upper Burma. This people inhabit the western Yoma mountains, between Burma and Arakan. The missionaries in charge are Rev. A. E. Carson and wife.

In April, 1888, the beautiful Pwo Karen chapel in Bassein was dedicated, free of debt. The sermon was preached by the venerable Brayton, who had come to the Pwo work fifty years before. The chapel cost five thousand dollars, one-third contributed by the Karens. The upper story is the chapel, with beautiful schoolrooms below.

At a meeting of the Rangoon Sgau Karen Association, it was enthusiastically decided to erect a "Vinton Memorial" on the missionary compound. This was to take the

form of a large school building, in memory of the three Vintons—father, mother, and son. At this meeting, fifteen hundred dollars was pledged as an earnest of the larger amounts to follow.

Mr. Thomas returned from a brief furlough in 1888, and located in Sandoway, laboring for the Chins and Arakanese.

In 1889, came an appeal for five hundred dollars to build a Baptist chapel in Hammerfest, Norway, near the Arctic Circle. The various Sunday-schools in Rangoon, Karen, Burman, and English, responded with sixty-six dollars and thirty-eight cents as their contribution, the tropics aiding the polar regions.

This same year was organized the Arakan Baptist Association, with ten churches. The foreign mission spirit had here also an early development.

A movement was inaugurated in the Tavoy district of the greatest value to the Karens. Government granted Mr. Morrow two thousand acres of land, on which to locate certain of the Karen Christians, teaching them improved agricultural methods. As the Karens are the farmers of Burma, much is expected.

The Henzada Karens erected a beautiful chapel schoolhouse as a "Thomas Memorial." This Associational district was divided, the other half being the Tharrawaddy district, with headquarters at Zigon, under charge of Rev. W. C. Calder.

The Sandoway mission embraced six distinct nationalities—Chins, Arakanese, Burmese, Karens, English, and Telugus. The Ka Khyens had as missionaries in Bhamo, Rev. W. H. Roberts and wife, besides two lady teachers.

In 1889, the Bassein Karens completed a large and beautiful hospital as the "Carpenter Memorial," besides bearing much expense in other directions.

In 1888, Mr. Denchfield was put in charge of the Rangoon Sgau Karen work. In 1890, Mrs. Vinton returned. Mr. and Mrs. Seagrave were also designated to this mission. The family relation to the work continued, Mrs. Seagrave being a daughter of Mrs. Vinton.

At the Fourth Annual Conference of Baptist Missionaries in Burma, a scheme of uniform Bible study for all the mission schools was adopted. Henceforth, Burman, Karen, Shan, Ka Khyen, Telugu, and English scholars will all study the same daily Bible lesson.

Mrs. Brayton died at Rangoon in 1890, after forty-eight years active service in Burma among the Pwo Karens. Thus was another link broken with the pioneer days, Mrs. Brayton having gone to Burma when Dr. Judson and Sarah B. Judson were in the full tide of their usefulness.

The statistics of the Karen mission for 1891 show thirty-six missionaries actually on the field, one hundred and twenty-two ordained and three hundred and twenty-

two unordained native preachers, four hundred and ninety-six churches, and twenty-seven thousand and forty members.

The Theological Seminary appeals for a fitting building for its beautiful site at Insein. Prof. E. B. Roach is president of Rangoon Baptist College. Prof. D. C. Gilmore and wife have been added to the faculty.

New tribes of Karens are being reached. The Kachin work, carried on as a foreign mission by the Bassein Karens, has now an association of its own. A constantly increasing demand for higher education is a prophecy of future power and efficiency for the Karen nation.

QUESTIONS.

1. What followed the annexation of Upper Burma?
2. What is said of Karen aid given the Government against the dacoits?
3. Give a sketch of Dr. Vinton's work, and date of death.
4. Tell the story of the two first scholarships in Karen Theological Seminary.
5. What is said of Dr. Ellen E. Mitchell?
6. What relation had the Vintons borne to the Sgau Karen mission?
7. Describe the Christmas jubilee of the Bassein Sgau Karen in 1887.
8. Give facts regarding new stations for the Chins in Upper Burma.
9. Describe the dedication of Pwo Karen chapel in Bassein, with date.
10. What was the Vinton memorial?
11. How did the tropics aid the polar regions?
12. What event in Arakan in 1889?
13. Describe plan for agricultural instruction in Henzada.
14. What and where was the Thomas Memorial?
15. How and when was the Henzada district divided?
16. What nationalities in the Sandoway mission?

17. What American missionary to the Ka Khyens, and where located?
18. Where and what was the Carpenter Memorial?
19. What is said of Rangoon Sgau Karen work?
20. Give plan of daily uniform Bible study for all the mission schools.
21. What is said of Mrs. Brayton?
22. Give statistics for 1890.
23. What changes in the faculty of Rangoon Baptist College?
24. Give latest facts in Karen work.

SUPPLEMENTARY READING.

Self-support in Bassein. The Story of the Karen Mission in Bassein.

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